

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Original) A process for producing vitamin C from L-sorbose which comprises contacting L-sorbose with a purified L-sorbose dehydrogenase having the following physico-chemical properties;
 - a) Molecular weight: $150,000 \pm 6,000$ Da or $230,000 \pm 9,000$ Da (consisting of 2 or 3 homologous subunits, each subunit having a molecular weight of $75,000 \pm 3,000$ Da)
 - b) Substrate specificity: active on aldehyde compounds
 - c) Cofactors: pyrroloquinoline quinone and heme c
 - d) Optimum pH; 6.4 to 8.2 for the production of vitamin C from L-sorbose
 - e) Inhibitors: Co^{2+} , Cu^{2+} , Fe^{2+} , Ni^{2+} , Zn^{2+} , monoiodoacetate and ethylenediamine tetraacetic acid,wherein the conversion of L-sorbose to vitamin C is catalyzed by the purified L-sorbose dehydrogenase in the presence of an electron acceptor, and isolating the resulting vitamin C from the reaction mixture.
2. (Original) The process for producing vitamin C from L-sorbose according to claim 1, wherein the L-sorbose dehydrogenase is derived from the strain *Gluconobacter oxydans* DSM No. 4025 (FERM BP-3812), a microorganism belonging to the genus *Gluconobacter* having identifying characteristics to *G. oxydans* DSM 4025 (FERM BP-3812) or its mutants.

3. (Currently amended) The process according to claim 1 ~~claims 1 and 2~~, wherein the reaction is carried out at pH values of about 6.4 to about 9.0 and at a temperature range from about 20°C to 60°C for about 0.5 to 48 hours.

4. (Currently amended) The process according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 and 2~~, wherein the reaction is carried out at pH values of about 7.0 to 8.2 and at a temperature range from about 20°C to 50°C for about 0.5 to 24 hours.